



GREATER NORTHWEST RAIL SUMMIT

October 8-9, 2024

Spokane, Washington | *Virtual Attendance Available*

Register to attend at www.nwsummit.org

The Greater Northwest Rail Summit brings together rail experts, users, and advocates to enhance and expand the freight and passenger rail network in the Greater Northwest. With unprecedented funding at the national level, now is the time to focus local attention and investment on a regional High Performance Rail network. Our rail corridors are most productive when they move both people and goods efficiently, safely, and reliably.

Tuesday, Oct. 8 | Day 1

7:00am	Registration Opens
8:00am	Breakfast Served
8:30am - 8:45am	<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief background, quick overview of PNWER RIA • Vision for the event, objectives, outcomes
8:45am - 9:00am	<p>Spokane as a Rail Hub</p> <p>Spokane County is the capital of the Inland Empire and serves as the hub for commerce, agriculture, tourism, and freight movement. Welcoming us to Spokane County and to the 2024 Greater Northwest Rail Summit is four term Spokane County Commissioner Al French. Commissioner French sits on the governing board of the Palouse-Coulee City Railroad (the largest state owned short-line railroad in the Northwest). Spokane County also owns the Geiger Spur which serves many industrial users along with the recently completed Transload facility which will be opening soon. Commissioner French Chairs the Spokane Regional Transportation Council and serves as a Board Member for the Washington State Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board, the Washington County Road Administration Board, and the state Transportation Improvement Board. In 2008 Commissioner French received the single national Outstanding Board Member of the Year award from the American Public Transportation Association, the only elected official in the state of Washington to receive that award.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Al French, Spokane County Commissioner
9:30am - 10:30am	<p>Rail as an Economic Accelerator</p> <p>Rail creates enhanced access to local products and commodities as well as commercial development around a train station, spurring economic development in rural and urban areas alike. How can local governments leverage both freight and passenger rail to encourage development and economic resiliency in their communities?</p>



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<p>10:40am - 12:00pm</p>	<p>Renaissance for Passenger Rail across America: From Washington DC to Your Local Depot</p> <p>With unprecedented funding at the national level, we're seeing long-overdue attention and investment in the Greater Northwest's passenger rail network. Hear updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Federal Railroad Administration Corridor Identification & Development ● Big Sky North Coast federally-designated long distance route ● Amtrak Empire Builder and Coast Starlight long distance routes ● Amtrak Cascades state supported route (CID process and bi-national planning for the 2026 World Cup) ● Proposed Pioneer long distance route
<p>12:15pm - 1:15pm</p>	<p>Lunch Plenary: Looking Ahead at the National Rail Network</p> <p>The excitement around restored passenger rail service is not limited to the Greater Northwest. How are expansion plans and strategic investments across the country advancing a national rail network and how will that benefit our region?</p>
<p>1:30pm - 2:30pm</p>	<p>Green Farms to Green Ports: Feeding the World Starts with a Short Line</p> <p>Short line railroads are the capillaries through which agricultural and manufactured goods flow to the Class I railroad arteries. Investing in and maintaining these critical corridors supports local economies, global trade, and the success of our inland port authorities.</p>
<p>2:30pm - 3:30pm</p>	<p>Green Farms to Green Ports: Strengthening Supply Chains Through Rail Investment</p> <p>Across the Greater Northwest, trains moved 50.1 million tons of freight in 2021, keeping the equivalent of 4.1 million trucks off the road. Recent projects show how ports and railroads work together to connect our inland farms with international markets and move agricultural products with lower emissions.</p>
<p>3:45pm - 4:45pm</p>	<p>Breakout Conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Part 1: Exporting Agricultural Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are two opportunities and challenges that you see in your community related to freight rail? ● Part 2: Readiness for Passenger Rail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are two opportunities and challenges that you see in your community related to passenger rail?
<p>4:45pm - 5:00pm</p>	<p>Closing Comments for the Day</p>



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5:30pm - 7:30pm	Evening Reception, Riverside Place Commandery Room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored by David Evans & Associates • Food by London's Ultimate Catering
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Wednesday, Oct. 9 | Day 2

7:00am	Registration Opens
8:00am	Breakfast
8:30am - 8:45am	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIA / BNW Council • All Aboard Northwest
8:45am - 9:45am	Northwest Rail Networks and Port Terminals: Strategies and Partnerships Strategic investments in our ports, mainline rail corridors, and shortline railroads can help move goods to and from the coast and boost the economy. How are each of these key players prioritizing investments across our region, and how can we work together to build a robust freight network?
9:50am - 10:50am	Preparing Rural Communities for Passenger Rail Tourism With many communities depending on tourism to support their local economy, passenger rail provides tremendous opportunities for our region to showcase its unique natural, cultural, and historic attractions. How can rural farming communities or small mountain towns start to plan for tourists arriving by rail? What should small towns consider as they start to build out a tourism-by-rail industry?
11:00am - 12:00pm	Town to Town: Knitting Together a Multi-state Rail Corridor A regional rail strategy starts at the local level. How are each of the Northwest states prioritizing rail investments and how can we coordinate between jurisdictions to best achieve High Performance Rail corridors?
12:15pm - 1:15pm	Lunch Plenary: Reauthorization - What's next for federal passenger and freight rail funding? The IJJA authorized unprecedented investments in our rail system. The push for re-authorization in 2025 has already started. What should we know about the federal budgeting process and how will it impact local investments in the Greater Northwest? What can stakeholders do to help forward this process?



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1:30pm - 2:30pm	Green Rail Infrastructure: Saving Salmon & Enhancing Air Quality Investments in rail infrastructure can move people and goods more quickly while also producing environmental benefits for our communities. Whether it's highway-rail grade separation that reduces vehicle idling and congestion or improved bridges and culverts that support salmon habitat restoration, investing in our rail network is a benefit to all.
2:35pm - 3:35pm	Passenger Rail as a Healthcare Lifeline When the nearest hospital is over a treacherous snowy pass, or a disability or age prevents you or a loved one from driving, passenger rail service becomes a critical connection for rural communities. Equity, accessibility, and improved health outcomes are priorities for rural and tribal communities across the Greater Northwest.
3:45pm - 4:45pm	Rail Advocacy in 2025: Input from all corners Both regionally and nationally, 2025 will be an important year for securing investments in our rail network. But how do we organize constituents, persuade lawmakers, and advocate together for High Performance Rail?
4:45pm - 5:00pm	Closing Comments for the Summit